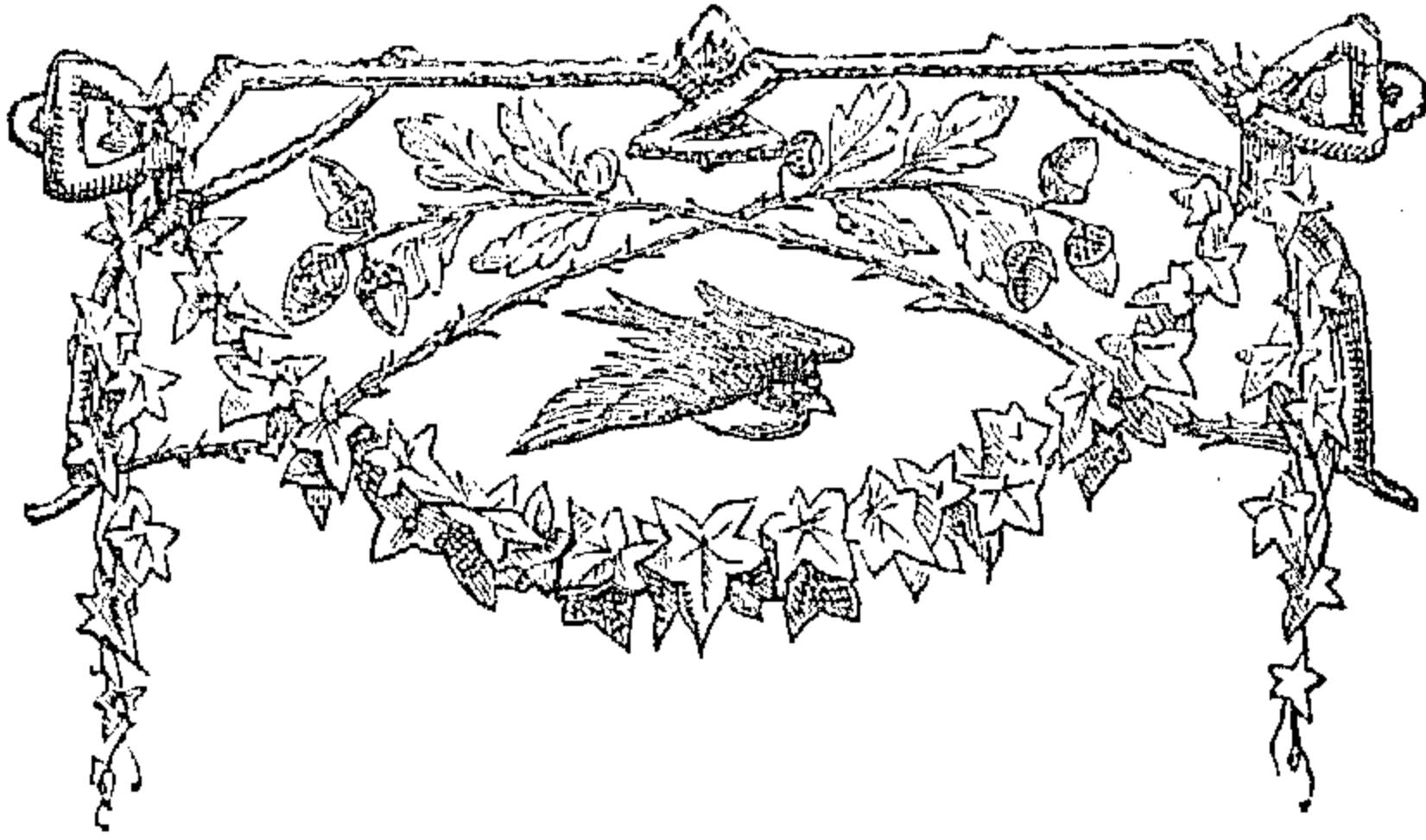


a community called ...

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A FRIEND INDEED.

FRRIEND is a term used to describe one whom we love and esteem above others, to whom we impart our minds more familiarly than to others, and that from a confidence of his integrity and good-will toward us. Thus Jonathan and David were mutually friends.

Solomon, in his Book of Proverbs, gives the qualities of a true friend: "A friend loveth at all times;" chap. xvii, 17; not only in prosperity, but also in adversity. "There is a

friend that sticketh closer than a brother; chap. xviii, 24; he is more hearty in the performance of all friendly offices; he reproves and rebukes when he sees any thing amiss. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend;" chap. xxvii, 6; his sharpest reproofs proceed from an upright and truly loving and faithful Lord. He is known by his good and faithful counsel, as well as by his seasonable rebukes. "Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel;" chap. xxvii, 9; by such counsel as comes from his very heart and soul, and is the language of his most inward and serious thoughts. The company and conversation of a friend are refreshing and reviving to a person who, when alone, is sad and dull and inactive. "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Chap. xxvii, 17.

Reader, do you want a friend? Yes, a *friend*. How soul-cheering the name! How blessed the reality! Rob you of the last friend, and where could you find a bright spot on earth? I want to direct you to one whose

friendship will be of more value to you than that of all others in the world. But before I tell you his name, let me point out to you some of his excellences.

1. He is a *tried friend*. He has been tried for thousands of years by millions of individuals, and he has never, in a single instance, proved treacherous, or deserted one in the hour of need or peril. A "cloud of witnesses" can be brought forward to attest this truth. Reader, you have tried many friends. Some of them probably have proved to be real friends; but, alas! how many have you found to be "rotten at the core?" They have "flattered only to deceive."

2. *He is a powerful friend*. Other friends may really desire to help you, but how often are you in circumstances where they cannot render you the assistance you need. But this friend can afford you the needed help in all possible circumstances in which you can be placed. He can shield you from the most powerful enemies, and amid the greatest dangers. Though the whole world should com-

bine for your destruction, yet flee to him, and beneath the protection of his arm you are safe.

3. *He is always at hand and ready to help.* Other friends may be far from you at the very time you most need their assistance. Between them and you perhaps oceans may roll. But not so this friend. He never leaves nor forsakes those who trust in him. He is always by their side to protect them from the most unexpected dangers, and to provide at all times for their wants.

4. *He is rich and able to supply your wants.* How many wants for your body and soul which no earthly friend can relieve! But this friend has a rich supply for every want of body and soul, for time and eternity. Though you had the friendship of the mightiest earthly monarch, yet even his wealth and resources might fail, and his throne crumble to ruin. But this friend has resources for the supply of your wants which are absolutely exhaustless. And though he has supplied the wants of millions of his friends, yet his treasures are not in the least diminished.

Some of my readers may be among the number of those whose earthly treasures have "taken to themselves wings and fled away. At a time when our country is rocked as with a tempest, and agitated as on a volcano, perhaps all your friends are sharing with you in the general anxiety. Do you not then peculiarly heed this friend! Will you not make him yours?

5. *He is a sympathizing friend.* Perhaps you have known by experience how cheering it is to have a friend to sympathize with you in the sad hours of your affliction. Surely this of itself was "like cold water to the thirsty soul." Perhaps too, at such times, you have seen professed friends stand aloof, and you could almost say, "Friends have I none." But this friend has always proved "a friend in need;" one who is always "touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

6. *He will be a friend when all other friends fail.* All other friends can go with you but a little way in your future journey. Death is just ahead of you. This friend alone can stand

by you as you grapple with the "king of terrors," as you go down the lonely and dark vale of death. And then during that long eternity beyond, how wretched must you be unless this friend is yours !

Do you ask the name of this friend. *His name is* JESUS. Will you *now* make this friend your own? If so, the *terms* of friendship with Jesus Christ are :

1. That you lay down the weapons of your rebellion—your pride, your self-will, your sinful habits ; remembering well that he is your LORD as well as your Saviour. Acts x, 36.

2. That you renounce fellowship with his enemies, that you come out from among them and be separate, remembering that he who would be your friend will also be your JUDGE. 2 Cor. vi, 17.

3. That you return with deep humility to Him from whom you have revolted, acknowledging your guilt and wretchedness, that you "have sinned against heaven and before him," remembering that "he hath commanded all men every-where to repent." Acts xvii, 30

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.” Acts iii, 19.

4. That you believe in his willingness and ability to save you from your sins on earth to his glory in heaven. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” Acts xvi, 31.

These are the terms of reconciliation with God, (see 2 Cor. v, 19–21;) of friendship with Jesus, (see John xv, 14;) of communion with the Holy Spirit, (see John xvi, 7–11;) and to all who are ready to comply with them the Lord Jesus himself says, “Come unto me, and I will give you rest.” Matt. xi, 28, etc.

Does *your* heart, O reader, feel touched with a sense of your ingratitude to God, in having so long slighted the “inestimable love” of your heavenly FRIEND?—O cherish this feeling! Suppress not the sigh which a sense of guilt upon your heart may occasion; restrain not the tear which starts to your eye in the remembrance of a long forgotten God; but *now* lift up your desires to the throne of the heavenly grace; *now* get alone with God, and bowing your knees at his footstool, free-

ly confess all your transgressions to him who graciously *waits* to pardon them; pour out your supplications to him who bows down his ear to hearken unto them. And “to-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not his heart.” Receive this little messenger as directed by the providence of God, to call you, *once more*, to himself. It may be the *last* call. O hearken to it! that it never may be said to you, by Him who would *now* be your friend—when all hope of friendship and reconciliation shall be *forever* fled away—“Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity: I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.” Prov. i, 24–27.



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